

## REVIEWS OF RECENT BOOKS.

**Westermarck, E., Ph. and LL.D.** *Marriage Ceremonies in Morocco.* London. Macmillan and Co., Ltd.; 1914; price 12s.; pp. 422.

THE possibility that a sort of eugenic instinct exists in the human race is suggested by the fact that marriage is surrounded by more ritual than any other human function and by the special character of some ceremonies. In number and variety the symbolic and magical performances collected by Prof. Westermarck are remarkable. His general explanation, which will serve as a working hypothesis for the study of all ceremonial, is that marriage ritual is an application of magical ideas for the purpose of ensuring the safety and welfare of the bride and bridegroom. "A very large number of marriage ceremonies spring from the feeling or idea that bride and bridegroom are in a state of danger, and therefore stand in need of purification and of special protection against magical influences and evil spirits." To this chief class belong such customs as shutting up the bride in a box, dressing her as a man and the groom as a woman, and the curious quivering noises made by the attendant women on all possible occasions. Ceremonies with a positive intention include many whose object is to make the bride a mother and a mother of male offspring.

Thus the bridegroom's mother sings a song praying for male twins "or even one son"; or she carries a sieve or a bundle of her son's old clothes on her back, like a baby. A married woman who is blessed with children is selected to tie the magical knot, *hayek*, that the bride also may be fruitful. An interesting detail is that the more beautiful of the two young wedded people performs the usual ablution before the other on the wedding night; it is believed that the children will resemble that parent. Again, precautions are taken to prevent the offspring being diseased. Superstition in the service of eugenics has evidently been a force in human history.

Other sources for this or that ceremonial are justly admitted by the author. The origin of many is mixed. For instance, there are several which express or symbolise sexual bashfulness, a fact in itself indirectly eugenic.

Prof. Westermarck has resided among the tribes whose customs he has detailed so carefully, for various periods amounting in all to six years. This condition enhances the value of one of the most important contributions to the history of marriage.

A. E. CRAWLEY.

**Reissshelmer, HERMANN.** *Evolution by Co-operation. A Study in Bio-economics.* London. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner and Co.; 1913; price 3s. 6d. net.; pp. 200.

IN this book the author attempts to show—what he regards as a new principle of evolution—that a necessary condition for advance of type is that the organism should contribute at least as much to the total supply of nature as it takes from it. The relations of organisms should be like those of manufacturers, each produces something which the other lacks; if an organism lives at the expense of another without contributing anything in return, it *ipso facto* degenerates. When a species lives "legitimately" it adds directly or indirectly to the total food supply, and thus the Malthusian doctrine of over-production of individuals is said to fail. It is, of course, obvious that if an organism lives in such a way as to increase its own food supply, as in the case of an insect which feeds on and at the same time fertilises a flower, it has a better chance than one which merely destroys its food, and further that species which have a wide choice of food and habit are more likely to give origin to new forms than those which are specialised for one set of conditions. Apart from giving